

Council/Agency Meeting Held: _____		City Clerk's Signature _____
Deferred/Continued to: _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Denied		
Council Meeting Date: 11/15/2004	Department ID Number: CS04-028	

CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL ACTION

SUBMITTED TO: HONORABLE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS

SUBMITTED BY: *Penelope Culbreth Graft*
PENELOPE CULBRETH-GRAFT, CITY ADMINISTRATOR

PREPARED BY: JIM B. ENGLE, COMMUNITY SERVICES DIRECTOR
ROBERT F. BEARDSLEY, P.E., PUBLIC WORKS DIRECTOR
DUANE OLSON, FIRE CHIEF *CSO*
KENNETH SMALL, CHIEF OF POLICE *K Small*

SUBJECT: APPROVE THE LOCATION FOR THE 2005 4TH OF JULY
FIREWORKS AT HUNTINGTON BEACH HIGH SCHOOL

Statement of Issue, Funding Source, Recommended Action, Alternative Action(s), Analysis, Environmental Status, Attachment(s)

Statement of Issue: City Council approved moving the 4th of July Fireworks to the beach for the 100th anniversary in 2004 for one year only. Council needs to decide if the fireworks should go back to its regular location at Huntington Beach High School or continue at the beach.

Funding Source: 4th of July Fund

Recommended Action: Motion to:
Approve 2005 4th of July Fireworks Show to be conducted at Huntington Beach High School.

Alternative Actions: Direct staff to evaluate an alternative location for the 2005 fireworks show.

Analysis: In 2004, Council approved the relocation of the 4th of July Fireworks Show to the beach for the 100th anniversary of the 4th of July Celebration in Huntington Beach. Council approval was for one year only. This decision was made after considerable public input and Council deliberation.

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Planning for the 2004 Fireworks Show on the beach was a difficult task from a staff perspective. The primary reason was that the event had not been held on the beach for thirty years. It was difficult to predict how many people would attend and what the impacts would be from a traffic, pedestrian and parking perspective. Also, the city does not have enough law enforcement officers to handle an event of this size, and obtaining outside resources was a problem.

Overall, the 2004 event was successful. An estimated 150,000 people attended the event without any major incidents. The 4th of July Executive Board raised sufficient funds through sponsorships, paid admissions, etc. to cover associated costs for the fireworks show and additional staff costs. There were, however, serious staff concerns associated with the 4th of July Fireworks Show on the beach.

The area surrounded by PCH to Adams Ave. and Beach Boulevard to Goldenwest Street was inaccessible to emergency vehicles, including police cars, fire trucks and ambulances. Secondary response teams and the ability to transport medical emergencies to appropriate treatment facilities and return to the downtown area to resume providing services were significantly impacted by the large crowd.

A large number of people were not able to reach the beach area because southbound Beach Boulevard was backed up to the 405 Freeway at the time the fireworks show began. Traffic was stopped on most streets approaching the beach; many times the streets were blocked, not only with cars, but also with people walking, biking, and rollerblading en masse from curb-to-curb down the street. A post-event assessment of the conditions revealed that this traffic congestion would have made it impossible to ensure adequate response from emergency services if there had been a significant incident.

Fire, Police, and Public Works have been assessing alternatives to the safety access problem. Even though there were no major incidents this year, if there had been a home or business fire, vehicle accident, fireworks incident, any other type of accident involving a medical emergency or major disturbance in the venue area, it would have been impossible to respond in a timely manner.

In order to ensure timely access for emergency vehicles, it would be necessary to create traffic-free corridors for emergency vehicles. Staff has reviewed several concepts for providing traffic-free corridors, and none are feasible. The combination of several factors has resulted in staff concluding that it is not possible to attain the level of access needed to ensure adequate public safety response for fireworks at the beach. These factors include:

1. The physical layout of the beach with access limited only to the land side;
2. The inland streets by the beach that are impacted by a high volume of vehicular and pedestrian traffic which impedes emergency vehicles;

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3. The high volume of traffic using Pacific Coast Highway on July 4 results in substantial congestion with any level of full or partial street closure;
4. The limitation of personnel resources available on the 4th of July for Fire and Police protection; and
5. The level of traffic control and access restriction needed to maintain emergency access would result in significant adverse impacts to downtown merchants and residents throughout most of the late afternoon and evening.

The 100th Anniversary 4th of July Parade and Fireworks on the beach was very successful and had no major incidents. However, staff review of the event has concluded that it would have been impossible to provide timely emergency response to any major incident that may have occurred due to traffic congestion and crowds.

Therefore, since there is no feasible way to provide reasonable emergency vehicle access to the beach venue (beach and downtown business and residential areas), staff is recommending that the 2005 Fireworks Show be relocated back to Huntington Beach High School.

Environmental Status: N/A

Attachment(s):

City Clerk's Page Number	No.	Description
4		PowerPoint Presentation

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